

23 April 1966

STAT Dear [ ]

STAT I am taking advantage of [ ] TDY to get this note conveyed to you by safe hand.

As you may know, Peer will soon be leaving. When he moves on to his new duties I will be replacing him, at least for the time being, as the Director's Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs and chief of the Vietnamese Affairs Staff. I understand, however, that it is his wish that you take the job after you have had your leave and gotten settled down back in Washington. How final or irrevocable this decision is, whether or not you have been consulted, and what your own feelings are in this matter are all questions on which I am very much in the dark and hence can give you little enlightenment.

Though obviously I will be delighted to run this operation as long as he wants me to do so, I personally can readily see the desirability of having you do this job and think you would find it not only challenging but also extremely rewarding. It goes without saying that I would consider working for you both an honor and a pleasure.

As I understand it, in any event you will not be back on duty in Washington until sometime in the late summer or early fall. For several months, therefore, I will be operating more or less on my own even if you are eventually coming in to take over. The main purpose of this letter is to solicit any thoughts, suggestions, or views you may care to offer on things you would like done or ground work you would like laid prior to your return so that while operating during the summer I can at least be moving along the lines in phase with your own thinking.

There are two concrete steps I propose to take both of which I would like to check informally with you. First, I plan to do a body snatch on [ ] if this meets with your approval. I have already written him sounding out his views and expect he will take the matter up with you. I do not need to catalog [ ] talents for you. I do feel very strongly that a post on this staff would be the Washington billet from which these talents could be most effectively used both from the Agency and for the total Government Vietnam effort.

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The second thing I propose to do is to establish something that does not exist anywhere in town: a situation room complete with wall maps and other supporting visual aids where information will be immediately posted and one can get at a glance the total picture of the situation in Vietnam as reflected in the most recent information available here. I feel the need for this very strongly and have long been distressed at its non-existence. This will involve stealing a conference room [redacted] and perhaps a small increase in our personnel (one research assistant to plot the data and one extra typist for clerical work). Our physical lay-out lends itself to this since there is a conference room adjacent to us and the present operation center is directly overhead.

I would be most grateful if you would drop me a line at my home address letting me know your thoughts on these and related matters. I am looking forward to seeing you on your return and would welcome the opportunity to work with you if that proves to be your desire and the Director's.

With warmest personal regards, I remain

Sincerely yours,

George

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Mr. George A. Carver, Jr.  
[redacted]